

**2015 U.S. - SPAIN  
YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAM**



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**2015 Young Leaders**

<b>Tico Almeida</b>	<b>Freedom to Work</b>
<b>Carlos Antón</b>	<b>Sears Holdings</b>
<b>Brad Cole</b>	<b>Illinois Municipal League</b>
<b>Jana Nelson</b>	<b>Department of State</b>
<b>Marisa Paul</b>	<b>Raytheon Corporation</b>
<b>José R. Pérez-Riera</b>	<b>Puerto Rico Economic Development Company</b>
<b>Soledad Roybal</b>	<b>Department of State</b>
<b>Daniel Sullivan</b>	<b>Shafik Garb Foundation</b>
<b>Celina Vásquez</b>	<b>Dallas County Community College</b>
<b>Roberto Fierro</b>	<b>United States – Spain Council Representative</b>

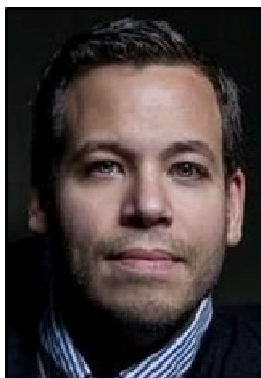


**Tico Almeida**

***Founder and President of Freedom to Work***

Tico Almeida founded the national LGBT organization Freedom to Work in 2011. He has extensive experience advocating for workplace fairness as a civil rights litigator in private practice, including the historic lawsuit Freedom to Work vs. ExxonMobil alleging anti-lesbian hiring bias at the largest corporation in the world. Almeida has also served as legislative attorney in the U.S. Congress. From 2007 to 2010, Almeida served as lead counsel on the proposed Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) for the Committee on Education and Labor of the U.S. House of Representatives. He drafted several portions of the bill and organized Committee hearings in support of ENDA. While working in the U.S. Congress, Almeida also specialized in immigration reform and international trade (U.S. trade agreements with Peru, Panama, and Colombia).

Almeida has provided media commentary on LGBT rights to publications including the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Washington Post, Politico, Associated Press, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Miami Herald, McClatchy, Congressional Quarterly, the Hill, Huffington Post, CBS News, CNN and Current TV. Almeida has been named one of the Top 40 LGBT Lawyers Under the Age of 40, the Advocate Magazine's 40 under 40, and also served as Chairman of the Employment and Labor Law Section of the Hispanic National Bar Association. He received his J.D. from Yale Law School and his B.A. from Duke University.



**Carlos M. Antón**

***Sears Holdings***

Carlos Antón is a dynamic leader with a record of corporate and community achievement. Currently managing a boutique business consulting and digital marketing practice, Antón has significant experience in Engineering, Operations, Program Management, Marketing, and Finance in Fortune 50 companies such as Verizon, Comcast, Boeing, General Electric, Comcast, and Sears.

Antón graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a degree in Industrial Engineering and has been an active board member in such non-profits as:

Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics, AYUDA for the Arts, and Repertorio Español.

Most notably, Antón is President Emeritus of the New York City Professional Chapter of SHPE and has been recognized by Crain's New York Business as a "40 under 40" rising star.

### **Additional Detail**

Antón was National Director of Workforce Planning for Sears Home Services, the nation's largest provider of home services, with more than 14 million annual repair and installation calls. Responsible for workforce planning, market and demand rationalization, optimization, and analytics programs for the Sears In-Home Repair business – he was accountable for deployment strategies to maximize profitability, customer satisfaction, and productivity of a countrywide 7,000+ technical labor force.

Prior to this role, Antón was Director of Technical Operations for Comcast; the nation's largest provider of video and high-speed data services where he was responsible for day-to-day service delivery, maintenance, and P&L activities for residential and commercial video, high-speed internet, and digital voice subscribers in Washington DC, Eastern MD and DE.

Antón was also a leader in Verizon's landmark Fiber to the Premises (FTTP) project, FiOS, where Mr. Antón held various national, regional, franchising, engineering, marketing (GIS), operations, and program management roles. Prior to Verizon's FiOS, Antón held key leadership roles in Verizon's post 9/11 Disaster Recovery project and has prior work experience at Boeing and General Electric Power Systems.



**Brad Cole**

### ***Illinois Municipal League***

Brad Cole currently serves as executive director of the Illinois Municipal League, which is the statewide association of cities, towns and villages and whose mission is to educate, advocate for, and empower its member communities specifically related to state and federal issues.

Brad most recently was Senior Vice President of Pepsi MidAmerica, where he helped lead nearly 1,000 employees and services in a five-state territory

throughout the Midwest. Prior to entering the private sector, he worked as Downstate Director for United States Senator Mark Kirk, of Illinois.

Cole served as Mayor of the City of Carbondale, Illinois from May 2003 through May 2011. Mayor Cole served two full terms in office, choosing not to seek a third term, and set policy direction for a home rule municipal government. He was elected the youngest-ever Mayor of Carbondale at the age of 31. Before his election as mayor, he served as Deputy Chief of Staff to a Governor of Illinois.

Mr. Cole serves as a member of numerous boards for both public and private organizations, mostly focused on charitable endeavors and healthcare systems. Cole was appointed by the Governor to the Illinois Human Rights Commission in 2014. He is also Chairman Emeritus of Sister Cities International, after serving two years as Chairman and more than a decade on its global board of directors.

Brad Cole, 43, is a graduate of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, with a bachelor's degree in a double major of Political Science and Biological Sciences and a Master of Legal Studies degree from the SIU School of Law.



**Ana Janaina Nelson (Jana)**

***Department of State***

Ana Janaina Nelson (Jana) is a United States Department of State Officer for Southern Cone Countries, a policy analyst responsible for managing the bilateral relationship with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay.

Previously she served on Senator Barbara Boxer's staff, where she was principally focused on staffing the Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy and Global Women's Issues. Jana has also served as Country Director at the Office of the Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy working on bilateral defense dialogues with Brazil, Chile and El Salvador.

Before joining the U.S. government, Jana was a consultant for the Eurasia Group and the Brazil Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Jana received her M.A. from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and her B.A. in International Relations from University of Brasilia. She is Presidential Management Fellow alumna, a U.S. government initiative designed to attract top talent to public service. Jana is a native speaker of English and Portuguese and is fluent in Spanish and French. In Latin America, Jana has lived and worked in Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Argentina.



## **Marisa Paul**

### ***Raytheon***

Marisa Paul is a Senior Manager of Government Relations at the Raytheon Corporate Office in Arlington, Virginia. Marisa supports Raytheon's Integrated Defense Systems (IDS) business, headquartered in Tewksbury, MA. In her position, Marisa is responsible for developing and implementing congressional strategy for Raytheon programs for IDS in conjunction with Corporate Business Development counterparts, for interaction with the Congress and the Department of Defense during the annual appropriation and authorization cycles and in support of international defense programs. In this capacity she focuses on missile defense and naval systems.

Marisa joined Raytheon in 2011 from Northrop Grumman Corporation, where she supported aviation and naval systems CEO-priority capture efforts with congressional, political, competitive intelligence and pricing counsel. She similarly advised executives on political implications of strategic sourcing and corporate expansion.

Before 2008, after serving in multiple government relations firms, Marisa managed her own practice in government affairs consulting, focusing on defense and intelligence matters before Congress, the Department of Defense, Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, the General Services Administration, and international humanitarian organizations.

Previously, Marisa served as a Presidential Management Fellow on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) from 2003 to 2006. There, she supported CNO special projects in Capabilities & Resources, Manpower, and Navy Appropriations.

Marisa earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at Duke University in North Carolina and a Masters in Business Administration with a concentration in Strategic Management and Public Policy from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

She is a member of the charter class of Next Generation National Security Leaders at the Center for a New American Security, an Atlantik-Brücke Young Leader and a Council for the US & Italy Young Leader. She is a member of Strategic & Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP) and the Navy League. Marisa has also provided counsel on global security matters to gubernatorial, congressional, and presidential campaigns.



**Hon. José R. Pérez-Riera**

***Puerto Rico Economic Development Company***

José R. Pérez-Riera is currently the President of a bi-partisan private economic development group composed of former Secretaries of the Government of Puerto Rico, focusing on bringing economic development projects and ideas to Puerto Rico and helping to make them viable.

From 2009 to 2012 he served as the Secretary of Economic Development & Commerce of Puerto Rico. He is the only Economic Development Secretary to have held 3 concurrent positions and the only one to hold the position for an entire 4-year term. Secretary Pérez-Riera oversaw more than 1,300 employees and 10 agencies with a consolidated budget of \$327 million. He provided leadership for all economic development matters in Puerto Rico.

Secretary Pérez-Riera was one of his Administration's main spokespersons in Puerto Rico, in the U.S. and internationally. He was tasked with implementing many of the most important reforms enacted during the Term: he was a member of the Executive Committee that drafted the Tax Reform and he presided the Executive Committees that drafted the Renewable Energy Reform and the Permits Reform. He was also responsible for creating groundbreaking incentives such as Acts 20 & 22 of 2012, and served as one of five members of Puerto Rico's Fiscal Restructuring & Stabilization Board.

Prior to his tenure as a public servant, Secretary Pérez-Riera was an investment banker in New York working at Barclays Capital and UBS Investment Bank, where he specialized in the Puerto Rico credit. Secretary Pérez-Riera also worked as an attorney and served as a law clerk for the Chief Judge of the District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. He is bar certified in Puerto Rico, New York, Florida, and Washington, D.C.

Secretary Pérez-Riera holds a Bachelor of Arts from Georgetown University and a Juris Doctor from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C.



**Soledad Roybal**

***Department of State***





**Daniel S. Sullivan**

***Shafik Garb Foundation***

Daniel Sullivan serves as the 2014 Shafik Gabr Foundation Ambassador and Coordinator. He was an inaugural Gabr Fellow in 2013. Daniel is a Young Diplomat of the Global Diplomatic Forum in London and was a delegate to the United Nations First Global Forum on Youth Policies.

Serving for over a decade in the Massachusetts House of Representatives as Legislative Aide and Chief of Staff to the former Dean of the House, Daniel has extensive experience in constituent services, public policy, legislation, writing, and public relations. He serves as North American Representative to the Youth Advisory Board of UNHABITAT and as a Regional Representative to the United Nations Association of the U.S.A. Steering Committee.

Daniel is a Truman National Security Project Partner, Fellow of the New Leaders Council, volunteer at the Clinton Global Initiative, a former Youth Ambassador with United Religions Initiative, and an ordained Minister. He received his ALB in Government from Harvard University Extension School, a Certificate in Health and Human Rights from the Harvard School of Public Health, and is a graduate of the Leadership for Change program at the Winston Center on Leadership & Ethics at Boston College's Carroll School of Management.

Daniel was an Education Policy Fellow with the Institute for Educational Leadership, an American delegate to Young Turkey/Young America with the Atlantic Council and U.S. State Department, an Emerging Leader at UMass-Boston's Center for Collaborative Leadership, and has been a Pundit at [policymic.com](http://policymic.com). He hails from Plympton, Massachusetts.



**Celina Vásquez**

***Dallas County Community College***

Celina Vásquez is currently a Visiting Scholar in Government at Mountain View College. She teaches Federal and Texas Government. Mountain View College was founded in 1970, as the second of seven colleges established within the Dallas County

Community College District. It is located in southwest Dallas, and is a Hispanic-Serving Institution that serves more than 8,600 students.

Celina was born in Compton, CA. She is the daughter of an undocumented immigrant from Mexico and migrant farmworker, her mother Olga from Sinaloa and her father Luis from Michoacán. Her grandfather Francisco Vazquez was a bracero recruited to work in Uvalde, Texas. She has 3 sisters and 1 brother. Celina and her siblings are first generation college graduates and survivors of domestic violence. She is a member of the Hispanic Women's Network of Texas, American Association of University Women, and Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education.

Celina was re-elected to the State Democratic Executive Committee, Senate District 9 in June 2014, and serves as Past Chair of the Texas Latina List. Founded in 2013, Texas Latina List is a progressive political action committee committed to promoting and increasing active participation of Latinas at all levels of elected and appointed offices, including public boards and commissions.

Her community service currently includes the City of Fort Worth Community Development Council, District 2, Tarrant County Child Protective Services Board, and the Eastside YMCA Advisory Council. She also served on the Board of Public Health Toastmasters and as a Bilingual Volunteer Mediator at Dispute Resolution Services of North Texas, Inc. She enjoys reading in Spanish to her six year old son, Diego, and spending time with her husband, Fernando.

She received a Bachelor of Arts in Chicano/Latino Studies from California State University, Long Beach. She also attended Texas Woman's University and received a Master of Arts in Government and a Master of Business Administration. She is a proud graduate of Leadership America, Leadership Texas, Las Comadres Para Las Americas Texas Public Policy & Civic Engagement Program, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality Leadership Institute, and from The Women's Campaign School at Yale University.